

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Division. The branch provides Federal grading and certification services for meat and meat products which is conducted voluntary, and is financially self-supporting. These grading and certification services fulfill an important economic need of the livestock and meat industry by facilitating the nationwide identification and marketing of meat and meat food products.

The incumbent of this position performs grading and quality assurance monitoring duties, of limited scope and responsibility located at either a regional office, area office, or other office locations which may involve details and/or reassignments to different geographical areas as needed as determined by management.

II. Duties and Responsibilities

As a trainee, the incumbent receives formal and on-the-job training in applying basic theories, techniques, and methodology. The formal training includes instructions at a central training facility stressing familiarization with grade standards and purchase specifications and with the meat quality regulations, policies, and procedures. Upon successful completion of the training course, incumbent is assigned to a field location for on-the-job training involving specific assignments under close supervision to acquaint the employee with meat grading and quality assurance techniques.

Examines meat and/or meat products before and after purchase and during processing, handling and transportation for conformance to contractual requirements and specifications. Quality assurance examinations of meat and meat products usually are conducted in contractor establishments.

Uses purchase orders, contracts, and technical specifications to review contractor's product to determine quality, quantity, processing, handling, packaging, refrigeration, transportation and storage. This involves examination by sensory evaluation and use of instruments designed for field examination of products.

Examines and grades some but not all classes of meat (e.g., beef, veal, calf, lamb, yearling mutton, etc.) And substantially the full range within each grade of dressed meat carcasses and wholesale cuts as establishments to which assigned. Interprets, maintains, and applies official standards.

Explains and defends grades assigned to carcasses and wholesale cuts of meat in terms of official standards when grades are questioned by plant management. Corrects self-made errors. Refers borderline decisions to supervisor or senior grader.

Is responsible for grading equipment assigned for use. Maintains adequate control of the equipment at all times to assure only authorized use, storage, and correct and proper application of grade and other official marks.

Prepares agricultural grading and acceptance certificates at the discretion of the supervisor. Participates in giving public demonstrations and reviewing retail meat outlets (i.e., supermarkets, meat markets, hotels, restaurants, etc.) for compliance with public Law 272 and maintains permanent records related to their duties.

III. Evaluation Factors

1. Knowledge Required by the Position 550 points

Fundamental knowledge of the general characteristics, anatomical structure, types of cuts, and processing techniques for meat and meat products to perform grading or acceptance assignments of a simple and routine nature and to further develop knowledge and skills through formal and on-the-job training.

The ability to learn the official grade and acceptance standards and regulations and to learn the specific grading and acceptance procedures.

The ability to develop skill in applying grading techniques.

2. Supervisory Controls 25 points

The supervisor or senior grader provides the assignment giving necessary detailed and specific instructions on the methods to be used in performing each phase of the work.

The grader works in strict adherence to the instructions. Assistance is readily available if needed, and the employee consults the supervisor or a senior grader to clarify instructions, product characteristics, or circumstances which are new or unusual to the employee.

The work is closely reviewed. It may be checked while in progress and upon completion for compliance with instructions for adherence to prescribed methods and procedures, for technical proficiency, and for the accuracy of any determination.

3. Guidelines 25 points

Written guidelines include parts of the official grade standards, regulations, specifications, visual aids, instructional training material, technical manuals, and other written guidelines. The trainee is

provided with the specific guidelines appropriate to the phase of work to be done. These guideline are further explained to the employee before the work is performed.

The trainee adheres closely to the guidelines and instructions. Borderline cases and/or situations not directly covered are referred to a supervisor or senior grader for classification or determination.

4. Complexity 75 points

The work involves following methods and procedures which are closely related. The technical factors necessary to consider are made relatively apparent and are readily verified. Variations in the work stem primarily from the particular type of grading being performed or product being accepted.

5. Scope and Effect 150 points

The work involves making some final determinations of carcass grades or product acceptability. These determinations affect the product's market value and consequently, the economic interests of producers, processors, wholesalers, and, in some cases, governmental agencies or instructions.

6. Personal Contacts 25 points

Contacts include other agricultural graders, meat inspectors, other Federal and State Government personnel, consumers, and industry personnel such as company graders, department supervisors, and production managers.

7. Purpose of Contacts 50 points

Contacts with industry employees are for the purpose of coordinating the grader's own sampling or grading work with plant activities. Minor difficulties raised by plant employees may be resolved by the trainee, but generally, questions and problems are routinely referred to a senior grader for resolutions.

8. Physical Demands 50 points

Commodity grading work requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing over 50 pounds; prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping, bending, and climbing; physical coordination and finger dexterity in both hands to perform digital examinations of commodities; ability to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color; the ability to assure safety in a highly mechanized and/or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing; and the ability to determine product quality through sensory perception (taste, smell, etc.).

9. Work Environment 20 points

The work environment includes exposure to cold temperatures of coolers, which are 25 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit (and on occasion for short periods at sub-zero temperatures) and other processing areas: the high noise levels of industrial processing equipment; the risk of forklifts, meat hooks and/or meat products and other items moving or falling; slippery floors and stairs; and the risks of cutting and sawing equipment.

Total Points - 970 = GS-5